

Appl. No. : Unknown
Filed : Herewith

U.S. Patent No. 5,162,047 discloses a thermal treatment installation which comprises a thermal treatment chamber, a "wafer boat"/rings assembly, a loading device and a transport device. With this arrangement the loading device serves to place wafers in and to remove wafers from the assembly and the transport device serves to place the assembly in and remove the assembly from the thermal treatment chamber.

On page 2, between lines 24 and 25, please insert --Summary of the Invention--.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 3, line 10, as follows:

An aspect of the present invention involves a method of transferring wafers between a thermal treatment chamber and a thermal treatment installation. The treatment chamber has a top section and a bottom section between which the wafer is accommodated during treatment. The thermal treatment installation has a loading chamber having loading means and transport means. The wafer is placed on a wafer support while in the loading chamber, wherein the wafer support is configured as a ring having support elements to support the wafer. The wafer support loaded with the wafer is inserted into the thermal treatment chamber so that the wafer and the wafer support are positioned between the top section and the bottom section. The wafer is individually processed in the thermal treatment chamber. After processing the wafer, the wafer support is removed from the thermal treatment chamber.

On page 5, between lines 13 and 14, please insert --Brief Description of the Drawings--.

On page 5, between lines 31 and 32, please insert --Detailed Description of the Drawings--.

On page 9, before line 1, please replace "Claims" with -- WHAT IS CLAIMED IS --.

Please add an abstract on a separate page that is enclosed hereto.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 1-21, published in WO 00/68977, without prejudice.

Please add the following new claims: